

Classical Music Appreciation—Intermediate

Class Outline

Bill Buffam, instructor
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This class is organized around three principal topics: **form and structure**, **historical periods**, and **instrumentation**. We will, however, spend most of our class time listening to music. Furthermore, we'll be listening to complete works (as opposed to excerpts) without interruption, guided by program notes (which are often quite detailed). I'll be marking off our progress as we listen to each piece, keeping you oriented to where we are in its structure.

While the chosen works illustrate the elements of the topics around which the course is organized, I selected music that I believe you'll find enjoyable and stimulating.

We'll have a 5-10 minute class discussion of each piece, during which we'll all be able to learn from one another's questions and insights.

There follows the outline for the entire class. You'll see that we jump back and forth among the principal topics, which accommodates the constraints of the schedule while working in some variety. Because of this jumping around, I suggest you bring handouts from all previous weeks to each class.

week 1

Introduction

*Vaughan Williams, Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*¹

Introductions

Form and Structure

Theme-and-Variations Form

Parks, First Romance [Theme-and-Variations Form]²

Elgar, Enigma Variations [Theme-and-Variations Form]

The major structural designs of classical music

Elgar, Serenade for strings [ABA form]

Mozart, Horn Concerto No.3 [rondo form (and also sonata form)]

¹ Italics indicate music we'll listen to.

² [brackets] explain what the piece is primarily chosen to illustrate

week 2

Haydn, Symphony No.102 [sonata form]

Historical Periods, Round 1

Major periods in classical music development

Plainsong (Gregorian chant) [Medieval period]

Holborne, The Fairy Round [Renaissance period]

Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 [Baroque period]

Boyce, Concerto Grosso in B flat [Baroque period]

JC Bach, Symphony Op 18 No 2 [music on the Baroque/Classical cusp]

Berlioz, Les Francs Juges [Romantic period]³

week 3

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 21 [Classical period]

Schubert Symphony No 8 [Romantic period]

Instrumentation, Round 1

The major ensemble types in classical music

*Bartok, Concerto for Orchestra, 2nd movement*⁴ [orchestral instruments]

Holst, St Paul's Suite [string orchestra]

Holst, Suite in F [wind band]

Vaughan Williams, Variations for Brass Band [brass band]

week 4

Historical Periods, Round 2

Beethoven, Symphony No 6 [music on the Classical/Romantic cusp]

Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique [Romantic period]

Instrumentation, Round 2

Vaughan Williams, Toward the Unknown Region [chorus and orchestra]

week 5

Historical Periods, Round 3

Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5 [Modern period]

Golland: Meiso [Modern period; brass band]

Debussy, La Mer [Modern period]

Instrumentation, Round 3

Barber, Summer Music [wind quintet]

Henry VIII, Rose without a Thorn [brass quintet]

week 6

Beethoven, String Quartet Op 18 No 6 [string quartet]

The Grand Finale

Dvorak, Symphony No. 9

Rimsky-Korsakov, Scheherazade

³ Yes, this one is out of chronological sequence. It's to accommodate the clock and the schedule.

⁴ That thing I said about playing only complete works: here's an exception, but it's the only one.